DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 826 RC 021 423

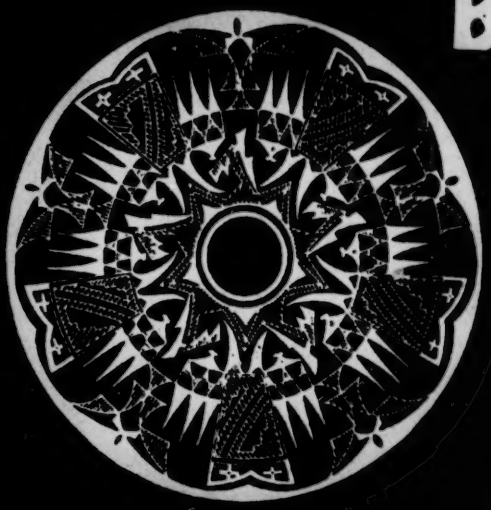
TITLE	Building Partnerships for Better Communities: Success Stories from Indian Country.
INSTITUTION	Aspen Systems Corp., Rockville, MD.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Native American Programs (HUD), Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	1997-04-00
NOTE	42p.
CONTRACT	DU100C000018407
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Alaska Natives; *American Indian Reservations; *American Indians; Community Education; Community Involvement; *Community Programs; Cultural Maintenance; Federal Programs; Housing; Prevention; *Substance Abuse; Tribes; *Youth Programs

ABSTRACT

This report describes 18 American Indian and Alaska Native community programs administered by Indian Housing Authorities (IHAs). The programs were funded first by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Relations and Involvement programs aimed at improving quality of life for housing authority residents, but most IHAs have obtained supplemental funding from tribal and nongovernmental sources. The individual programs highlighted show responses to social and economic isolation, substance abuse, educational needs, employment patterns, job training needs, child care needs, youth needs, community needs, traditional culture, and community values. The programs are located on the Fond du Lac Reservation of Chippewa (Minnesota), Ho-Chunk Nation (Wisconsin), Mississippi Band of Choctaw reservations, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewas lands (Michigan), Choctaw Nation (Oklahoma), Cherokee Nation (Oklahoma), Chickasaw Nation (Oklahoma), Standing Rock Reservation (South Dakota), Crow Reservation (Montana), Fort Berthold Reservation (North Dakota), Navajo Nation (Arizona), northern California rancherias, Makah Nation (Washington), Puyallup Nation (Washington), communities of the Pribilof and Aleutian Islands (Alaska), rural villages of Alaska's interior, communities of Cook Inlet (Alaska), and Tlingit-Haida villages of Alaska's southeast panhandle. (SAS)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 418 826



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS FOR BETTER COMMUNITIES

Success Stories from Indian Country

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

RC 021423

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Native American Programs

For more information concerning Community Relations and Involvement (CRI) programs in the Office of Native American Programs (ONAP), please contact your local area ONAP or Tracy C. Outlaw at the National ONAP, 1999 Broadway, Suite 3390, Box 90, Denver CO 80202, (303) 675-1600.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Building Partnerships for Better Communities: Success Stories from Indian Country

Prepared for:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Native American Programs

Prepared by:

Aspen Systems Corporation

Contract DU100C000018407

April 1997

These success stories have been compiled in an effort to share with audiences nationwide the extraordinary experiences and activities that have had an impact on Indian communities. We hope that you will enjoy reading this publication.

Table of Contents

Introduction 1

Eastern Woodlands

- Fond du Lac Center Helps Youth Resist Drugs and Gangs 3
- Ho-Chunk Resident Organization Organizes Across the Miles 5
- Mississippi Choctaw Drug Elimination Program Treats Substance Abuse in Community Setting 7
- Youth Sports Grant Founds Chippewa Camp 9

Southern Plains

- Choctaw Boys & Girls Club Builds Bridges Among Community Youth 11
- Family Investment Center Trains Cherokee Nation for a High-Tech Future 13
- Leadership Training Helps Chickasaw Homeowners Improve Community 15

Northern Plains

- Bear Soldier Resident Organization Develops Young Entrepreneurs 17
- Crow Program "Counts Coup" Against Drugs 19
- I-Ki-Pi Stretches Funds for Youth Sports and Drug Elimination at Fort Berthold 21

Southwest

- Navajo Resident Group Tackles Management Responsibilities 23
- Northern Circle Builds Communities To Resist Drugs 25

Northwest

- Resident Council Establishes Recreation Center for Makah Youth 27
- Resident Organization Connects Urban Puyallup to Services 29

Alaska

- Aleutian Housing Authority Fights Drugs With Scouting and DARE 31
- Council Gives Voice to Youth in Alaska's Interior 33
- Seldovia Tenant Council Takes "TOP Adventure" Statewide 35
- Tlingit-Haida Builds Youth Identity, Leadership 37

Indian housing authorities (IHAs)—like housing authorities everywhere—are finding that affordable housing alone is not enough to alleviate poverty and increase opportunities for their residents. Increasingly, these authorities and their residents are complementing their housing activities with programs that help Native Americans and Alaska Natives of all ages gain the skills they need to build a better future for their families and communities and keep traditional cultures alive. The case studies that follow illustrate the vigor and creativity that IHAs have shown when using one of their most important funding sources—the Community Relations and Involvement (CRI) programs of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)—to address their unique needs.

The achievement of these IHAs and the commitment and involvement of their resident partners is all the more impressive for the tremendous challenges that confront Native American and Alaska Native communities. Their populations have been growing rapidly, increasing almost sixfold in 40 years—to almost 2 million in 1990, according to U.S. census figures. Sixty percent of this population is concentrated in and around tribal lands. It is younger than the U.S. average—34 percent are age 18 or younger, compared with 24 percent of non-Indians. They are also more likely to be poor—24 percent live in poverty, almost double the rate of non-Indians.

Native Americans often live in geographically isolated communities that offer only limited access to economic and social opportunities. The vast territory of IHAs in Alaska and Western Plains areas can cover thousands of miles, some without connecting roads. Because of this isolation, the Tlingit-Haida Housing Authority in Alaska brings youth from isolated villages, some for the first time in their lives, to Juneau for youth leadership training. In northern California, Northern Circle Housing Authority tribes may need to wait an hour before the sheriff's department can reach their housing units.

Social and economic isolation can be just as devastating as the effects created by distance. For example, children and youth from the Fond du Lac reservation (Minnesota) often encounter racism off the reservation, so the Fond du Lac's drug elimination program offers a safe, drug-free drop-in center with a variety of educational opportunities. Youth, especially, may lack constructive activities and role models for the modern world of work. The drug elimination program of the Crow Tribe in Montana is bringing successful Native American role models to its youth programs. One of their goals is to enable Crow youth to be successful in both Indian and non-Indian worlds. The Choctaw Nation (Oklahoma) has used HUD's Youth Sports Program (YSP) to develop a multi-ethnic youth center where non-Indians and Indians from two tribes play together. Because school dropout rates are high when students feel alienated, a number of IHAs are arranging for general equivalency diploma (GED) classes and computer training to help youth and adults prepare for the world of work.

IHAs face an astonishing diversity of conditions. From the sea-washed islands of Alaska's Aleutian chain to the city of Tacoma, Washington, and the vast open spaces of the Navajo Nation in Arizona and New Mexico, housing authorities and their residents are designing programs to meet their needs. The Seldovia Tenant Council of the Cook Inlet, Alaska, housing authority schedules board training around the seasonal employment of its members. The Ho-Chunk resident organization in Wisconsin has arranged training of residents to offer childcare so there can be centers that serve the schedules of casino workers.

Residents take the first step toward meeting their needs when they organize to define their needs. Puyallup Housing Authority tenants living in northern Tacoma, Washington, felt cut off from tribal resources concentrated in the eastern part of the city. Their tenant organization surveyed residents before deciding which services to bring to their location. In northern California, tribes served by the Northern Circle Housing Authority first needed to acknowledge the impact that drugs had in their communities before they could take constructive anti-drug steps. Now tribal events are routinely described as alcohol- and drug-free.

These and other successful programs have been built upon strengths found in tribes' cultural traditions. Planning involved elders, youth, and other community members, using their wisdom to design culturally authentic approaches. The idea that cultural grounding is critical to success in combating substance abuse by Native Americans is supported by these successful programs, as well as a growing body of research literature.

Several of the successful programs discussed in this volume teach traditional culture and values through cultural camps. For example, the Chilkoot Culture Camp in Haines, Alaska, utilizes elders' skills to teach children and youth. The Sault Ste. Marie Chippewa Tribe in Michigan constructed a new camp on tribal land where many of their ancestors originated. The camp has hosted Ojibwa language immersion classes; sessions for youth and adults that emphasized traditional skills, such as snowshoe making; and special ceremonies for individual families. Their cultural camp is a source of pride for the tribe—in 1996 it served more than 1,800 people.

The programs in this report were funded first by HUD's CRI programs aimed at improving quality of life for housing authority residents—the Youth Sports Program (YSP), Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP), Tenant Opportunity Program (TOP), Resident Management Technical Assistance Grant (RMTAG), and Family Investment Center (FIC) program. Most IHAs have supplemented program funding with tribal and/or nongovernmental resources to expand program accomplishments. Although specific programs and funding streams change over time, HUD and IHAs remain committed to those programs' ultimate goals.

For generations now, Native Americans have struggled heroically to build better futures for their people while maintaining the integrity of their unique cultures. The programs highlighted here draw much of their strength from these family and community values, and magnify this strength and cultural vitality through their use of HUD's CRI programs as seed money to expand health, employment, educational, and recreational opportunities.

Fond du Lac Center Helps Youth Resist Drugs and Gangs

Youth on the Fond du Lac Reservation of Chippewa (Ojibwa) in northeastern Minnesota suffer economic and social isolation that puts them at risk of substance abuse and related crime. But before 1991 the reservation had few regular, drug-free activities available to Fond du Lac children and youth. Now a drop-in center in Cloquet, started with funds from HUD's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP), forms the hub for a variety of social and recreational opportunities.

About 3,100 people, fewer than one-half of them Indian, live within the borders of the 100,000-acre Fond du Lac Reservation, which encompasses the towns of Brookston, Sawyer, and Cloquet. About one-half of the Indian population is 18 years of age or younger. The opening of a casino has brought jobs and a return of tribal members to the reservation. Despite their proximity, the non-native and Indian communities do not always interact well. Indian children and youth experience racism that erodes self-esteem and fosters substance abuse. Last year 102 Fond du Lac juveniles were arrested for drug-related problems.

Fond du Lac Housing Authority executive director Kathy Beadle explains that since late 1995 leaders of the Fond du Lac Band of Ojibwa have been alarmed by the arrival of Native American gang members from Duluth and Minneapolis. These gang members have brought with them drugs, crime, and violence. The Cloquet police reported "a stunning 65-percent rise in calls related to drugs and their effects to our Cloquet housing areas" in 1995.

Reflecting the philosophy that prevention is the best defense, Fond du Lac's drug elimination program focuses on children and young teens, providing them with a drop-in center that is a safe and welcoming refuge. The center permits no gang activity. "The center is very, very important," affirms drug elimination coordinator Sherrill DeFoe. "The kids love it and the parents support it. But it's not just a drop-in center—this is a learning place. We teach shy kids that they can be proud of their work in an Indian way. They learn how to compete and win without being show offs."

The drop-in center in Cloquet is located in a large tribally owned gymnasium that houses athletic leagues, a weight room, and meeting and activity rooms. Here children and youth use computers and participate in games and activities that emphasize positive social and cultural skills. They practice their creative skills in traditional native crafts such as beading and making moccasins and ribbon shirts to wear to pow wows. They learn traditional songs, dances, and drumming. One talented teen painted a large, colorful mural for the center, "We the Anishinabe People," that celebrates all Chippewa people.

Sometimes groups from the center visit the housing authority's elderly housing units to learn the old Ojibwa stories. One tribal member directed the youth in the building of a traditional longhouse in the woods, where groups spend weekends foraging for food plants and learning about medicinal herbs.

The center also hosts nontraditional activities for youth—dances, a Halloween haunted house, and pizza parties. As part of the program to help the youth feel valued and valuable, center director DeFoe presents a certificate to whoever does something well. Pool tournaments are popular; winners are rewarded with certificates that are placed on the wall, and their pictures are included in an album on display at the center.

The Fond du Lac Band has also set up small after-school centers for younger children in Brookston and Sawyer. Children's House in Brookston is operated by a traditional Ojibwa woman, who passes stories and traditions to the little ones. In Sawyer children come to an after-school program in the center where a senior meal program also operates. These programs offer safe and supervised activities that are especially important to employed parents.

In addition, Fond du Lac's drug elimination program modifies available anti-drug materials to incorporate culturally appropriate elements. Dancers wear their DARE TO SAY NO T-shirts when they participate in pow wows throughout the State. Traditional Ojibwa counseling is available for tribal members seeking recovery from substance abuse.

The Fond du Lac Band works closely with local law enforcement to stop crime and violence, although these efforts are complicated because the reservation spans parts of two counties and is served by two county sheriff's departments and the Cloquet city police. To show its strong support, tribal government contributed $76,000 to the drug elimination program for 1997.

The housing authority has moved vigorously to remove gang members and drug dealers from its 209 rental units. In some cases gang members from Minneapolis or Duluth were operating from housing units. To deal with the problem, the authority revised its rules to provide for immediate eviction if any person living in the unit is not listed on the lease.

There is evidence that these programs are working. Last year's law enforcement reports indicated a 48-percent decline in drug-related activity by children under age 12. All but one of the 13 boys in the center's drum group have remained trouble free. Coordinator DeFoe reports that the drop-in center has remained a respected place—gang activity has stayed away.

"Now we hear kids talking about their plans for higher education," Beadle says. "When I first came here we didn't hear them talk about educational goals. A lot of kids now have part-time jobs. They take initiative."

Contact: Kathrine Beadle
Executive Director
932 Trettel Lane
Cloquet, MN 55720
Telephone: (218) 879-0351

Ho-Chunk Resident Organization Organizes Across the Miles

Graduation was a proud moment for each of the 12 participants who had completed the first childcare training program sponsored by the Ho-Chunk Resident Management Organization (HCRMO). "Many of these tenants had no postsecondary education," says Paul Tysse, grants writer for the Ho-Chunk Nation, which is scattered across more than 4,200 acres in 14 rural central Wisconsin counties. The program raised hopes beyond the small circle of graduates, he recalls. "Their families, the tribal and housing authority staffs, and resident board members were excited." And so were parents of about 100 children who have previously had to depend on untrained babysitters because of a lack of daycare options.

The Ho-Chunk Nation has operated casinos since 1991. Residents working at the three casinos—open 24 hours a day—can find it difficult to obtain reliable and flexible childcare to fit their work schedules. Parents also wanted more options within the small Ho-Chunk community, feeling that their children were not always treated fairly by non-Indian childcare providers.

HCRMO was awarded a 3-year Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) grant for $89,274 in 1995 to meet the needs of 425 Ho-Chunk Housing Authority residents in 151 units. To address these parents' requests, HCRMO sought out the Western Wisconsin Technical College (WWTC), which had a childcare and child development track as well as a deep commitment to improving educational opportunities for people in rural areas without access to its main LaCrosse, Wisconsin, campus. The college conducts interactive television classes at its satellite campuses and customizes programs. In this case WWTC developed a two-phase, 12-week childcare training program onsite at the Blue Wing Indian Housing Development's community center in Tomah. Residents from HCRMO's other housing developments carpooled to classes. The graduates are now eligible for TOP seed money through HCRMO to make the property modifications required to open home daycare facilities.

Tysse says that residents were also enthusiastic about HCRMO and WWTC's other collaborative training effort: an entrepreneurship program. Despite the casinos, tribal unemployment remains a relatively high 20 to 30 percent. The first 6-week entrepreneurship training course emphasized general business education such as financial management. The 18 participants have requested additional specialized training to help them design individual business plans. The resident management organization and WWTC are discussing the next step in training. Aspiring entrepreneurs, like the childcare training graduates, will also have access to TOP funds as startup seed grants.

Because HCRMO represents tenants living in seven rural housing developments across five counties, board members have picked up a few skills in long-distance community organizing. In addition to the more "commonplace" demands of implementing activities, managing drug elimination activities for the housing authority, and organizing board training sessions, HCRMO conducts regional outreach to organizations with varying perspectives on community needs and nurtures long-distance resident and board participation. HCRMO consults with housing authority personnel in Tomah and tribal department staff. Most important are informal contacts with the independent local resident councils that operate in six of the seven developments and, as Tysse puts it, are more intimately "connected with the fabric of the community." The local councils, which pre-date HCRMO, were in fact instrumental in its formation in 1993. They established HCRMO to assist Indian housing communities where resident councils were not sophisticated enough to administer HUD Comprehensive Improvement Assistance Program (CIAP) funds, which these communities otherwise would have lost.

The board has found that distance creates logistical and community differences that can undermine enthusiasm and participation in HCRMO's activities. Tysse notes that the board members—one from each of the seven communities and two at-large positions—have devoted more time than originally anticipated to organizing to "solidify community involvement." Every activity cannot benefit every single community, and the Ho-Chunk Nation shuttle bus cannot always transport everyone who might want to attend an event. Sometimes, Tysse allows, communities have been jealous of events held elsewhere. But even one result—such as the childcare providers graduation—"creates spin-off excitement and boosts resident involvement," he explains.

HCRMO board members have also had difficulty meeting around work schedules, particularly those of casino employees, and getting to meetings held throughout the five-county area. Hoping to decrease board member burnout, HCRMO and the Ho-Chunk Housing Authority have recently revived the idea of rotating meeting sites among the seven housing authority development sites.

Tysse has shared his grant writing experience with HCRMO resident board members and local resident councils. Rather than relying solely on Federal funding, which they consider less dependable than in the past, the organizations are writing grants to cultivate other public and private resources.

HCRMO's training and other activities already meet needs of many of its residents, but the board sees room for improvement. Currently they are working with the housing authority and the State of Wisconsin to develop youth after-school centers in four of the seven housing communities. Tysse and housing authority executive director Myra Jo Price believe these smaller efforts will provide a scaled-back model of the potential for a Family Investment Center in Tomah. The TOP grant already funded preliminary architectural designs for a proposed areawide center to be located in Tomah. In addition to housing service providers, the center could also provide space for HCRMO to expand its training activities; Tysse envisions an entrepreneurship resource center and a daycare in the future.

Contact: Paul Tysse
Housing Grants Writer
P.O. Box 730
Tomah, WI 54660
Telephone: (800) 236-2260

Mississippi Choctaw Drug Elimination Program Treats Substance Abuse in Community Setting

Since 1979 the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians in east-central Mississippi has created more than 3,100 jobs in tribal enterprises, with 70 percent of those positions held by tribal members. Tribal unemployment has declined from 75 percent in the late 1960s to less than 20 percent today. Despite this economic growth, substance abuse threatens the social fabric of the close-knit community of 6,000, where 90 percent of families speak Choctaw at home.

Sixty-three percent of arrests on the eight Choctaw reservations over a 5-year period were directly related to substance abuse, according to a 1990 study by the Choctaw Department of Law Enforcement. In a recent tribal survey, residents in seven of eight reservations ranked drug and alcohol abuse as their biggest problem. Although the reservations are dry, it is not uncommon for day laborers to be paid in alcohol or over-the-counter products that contain alcohol, such as antiseptic or mouthwash, according to Jesse Ben, the housing authority's drug elimination program coordinator. "Most clients prefer to 'self-medicate' in order to suppress problems in areas such as personal relationships, unemployment, and cultural identity," says Ben.

Helping residents fight substance abuse is a key priority for the Choctaw Housing Authority, which administers most housing on the reservations. The housing authority has been supplementing the substance abuse services provided by the Choctaw Health Center's Behavioral Health Program (BHP) since 1993 through a series of Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) grants from HUD's Office of Native American Programs. Since 1993 PHDEP has opened 277 cases and closed more than 200.

The biggest problem encountered in starting PHDEP was that "at first, some clients didn't want to cooperate because of their denial and substance abuse problems," Ben says. However, "with a few successes, PHDEP has become a known part of community services." PHDEP's active caseload is 55 clients, about two-thirds of whom are men who average 24 years of age.

The PHDEP team is composed of the PHDEP coordinator, two substance abuse counselors, a social service representative, a tribal community aid worker, and staff from BHP and the Choctaw Department of Social Services. The team meets each week to make assignments and review cases. Staff make home visits to conduct initial assessments and provide intervention counseling and outpatient treatment. If necessary, staff can refer clients to inpatient substance abuse treatment facilities.

PHDEP staff meet with clients at their homes, counseling with the entire family—an unusual method. "There is little success in the individual approach," Ben says. Each family member is affected by alcoholism and takes on enabling roles, he explains. In the home counseling sessions, PHDEP staff, most of whom are fluent Choctaw speakers, coach residents to develop effective communication, coping, and problem-solving skills within the family. PHDEP's guiding philosophy is reality therapy, which emphasizes the consequences of behavior in everyday life. Counselors work with each family to develop goals and create a family treatment plan to meet them. PHDEP also provides informal aftercare to many clients—with staff often continuing to check in with clients after their cases are officially inactive.

Staff frequently refer clients and their families to community resources such as parenting skills classes and job training. Staff also work with the tribal youth counselor, who involves youth in activities such as recreation, after-school programs, and the tribal youth council. The networking that staff do with local law enforcement, social services, child welfare, and other agencies is crucial to the program, according to Ben.

BHP handles detoxification at the Choctaw Health Center or at facilities on a neighboring reservation. When clients require extended hospitalization, BHP refers them to the nearest Indian Health Service substance abuse facility. Local Alcoholics Anonymous and other 12-step groups provide support for recovering substance abusers and their families. PHDEP staff run weekly substance abuse education classes at the tribal vocational education center. They have established a substance abuse resource center on the second-largest reservation and have plans for two others in donated community center space. Ben plans eventually to help each community start its own self-help groups.

The housing authority considers affirming the Choctaw language and culture to be an important prevention strategy. "A lot of our older people, who grew up before the civil rights movement, always felt like they had to be white to fit in," says Ben. "As a result, they gave up some of their traditional orientation, and I think some of them have a lot of anger and resentment." To address these cultural identity issues, PHDEP and BHP cosponsored a 3-day cultural awareness workshop in the fall of 1996, attended by 700 people. Working with BHP's mental health program, PHDEP also helped initiate sweat lodges and talking circles. "We have a need for more family-centered recreational activities and spiritual growth opportunities in order to address substance abuse-related issues within our youth population," Ben notes. He wants a greater PHDEP concentration on youth activities in the near future as a means of preventing substance abuse.

With its family-centered approach, home-based and inpatient treatment options, community education, cultural outreach, and new focus on prevention among youth, the Mississippi Choctaw's PHDEP has created a continuum of strategies with an impressive track record. Substance abuse-related arrests declined 22 percent in fiscal year 1994 and 17 percent in the following year. Arrests increased slightly in 1996, but Ben attributes this to a large increase in local police staff. Almost 8 of 10 PHDEP cases closed in 1996 had positive outcomes: Successfully treated residents curtailed their substance abuse and developed more control over their lives, as indicated by more regular payments of rent, housing, and utilities.

Contact: Jesse Ben
Public Housing Drug Elimination Program Coordinator
P.O. Box 6088 Choctaw Branch
Philadelphia, MS 39350
Telephone: (601) 656-6617

Youth Sports Grant Founds Chippewa Camp

Among the bright lights and activity of five tribally owned casinos, the elders of the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewas in northern Michigan dreamed of creating a quiet, natural place for tribal youth and their families to learn about Chippewa culture. The elders were also concerned about substance abuse among the youth. A 1990 Indian Health Service Adolescent Health Survey of area youth revealed significant substance abuse problems. Of students in grades 10 through 13, more than 77 percent had used beer or wine, 42 percent had used marijuana, and 23 percent had used speed or amphetamines. Many students reported problems due to the use of drugs or alcohol—18 percent had accidents or injuries, 22 percent had problems with school, and 29 percent had problems with their families.

In August 1995 the dream of the elders became a reality as the Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewas Housing Authority (SSMHA) dedicated its culture camp on 7-mile-wide Sugar Island, a place of historic significance to the Chippewas, in the Saint Mary's River. Many of the tribe's families originated on the island hundreds of years ago. "We believe that everything is a circle, everything is joined together," says Bud Biron, SSMHA's drug elimination/youth sports program manager, commenting on the location selected. "The culture camp has been a positive activity for the tribe as a whole. We are really proud of it. It is helping develop our culture, instilling a positive identity in our families and children, and helping keep them away from drugs and alcohol," boasts Jolene Nertoli, SSMHA's executive director.

The seed for the camp was planted in 1991, when the housing authority received a $125,000 Youth Sports Program (YSP) grant from HUD's Office of Native American Programs. As a first step, SSMHA convened a steering committee of tribal youth and elders to consider the best use of the grant. Consulting the elders on their visions for the youth program was critical to using the YSP grant appropriately, according to Biron. These meetings generated the idea of a camp on Sugar Island to steer youth away from harmful addictions and behaviors and to build pride in their culture. Accessible only by ferry and inhabited by about 350 people, the island seemed an ideal spot for a facility dedicated to the survival of Chippewa beliefs and traditions.

To design and build the camp, the housing authority chose Miles Homes, a developer with a well-known commitment to community service with whom they had previously worked. "When we were looking for housing packages for the housing authority," says Nertoli, "Miles Homes told us they believed in giving back to the community. The design they gave us for the camp was more than we had anticipated." Miles Homes donated plans and materials for the camp's two-story main building. Mary Murray, a tribal elder, donated 40 acres of wooded land for the camp. The housing authority used $60,000 in YSP funds plus tribal matching funds to construct the camp house. Housing authority residents provided much of the construction labor through the force account method of construction financing.

The main building contains dormitories with a total of 32 beds, a meeting area, a kitchen, and a small office. Outside are a talking circle, two sweat lodges, and a nature trail where youth can learn to identify natural medicines. Open year round, the camp offers many opportunities for youth and their families to learn tribal beliefs and hands-on skills. "It will promote the kind of learning that our grandmas and grandpas formed a long time ago and would be very happy with," says Cindi Thomas, a counselor with the tribal substance abuse program.

In 1996 approximately 1,800 people attended 57 camp sessions. "At the camps we try to build on each kid's gifts," Biron emphasizes. The 1996 events included sugarbush (making maple syrup), snowshoe making, an Ojibwa/Chippewa language immersion program, a women's retreat, and a youth practicum on the Chippewa approach to environmentalism, which was run in conjunction with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The camp draws Chippewas from across the United States and Canada. Individual families also use the camp for special ceremonies.

Biron runs three-quarters of the sessions himself. To produce a wide array of programs, he draws primarily on tribal members with knowledge of traditional ways. The tribe's cultural promotion committee uses casino revenues to pay honoraria to visiting camp instructors. To promote camp activities, Biron sends fliers and e-mail messages and places notices in the tribal newspaper. He distributes a monthly calendar and newsletter to each reservation.

Most of the 361 housing authority households are families with children, but tribal youth who live outside SSMHA housing may also attend camp sessions. Since the camp started, Biron says he has witnessed an increase in self-esteem and ability to handle conflict among the youth who have participated. Both attributes can help young people resist harmful behaviors. "The kids are so energized when they get to the camp," Biron observes, but many need to discover paths available to them other than drugs or alcohol. Many camp programs are open to youth and adults so that the young learn from older members of the tribe.

To expand the camp's activities, such as teaching the Ojibwa language, Biron would like to find additional sources of financing. "We lost our language 150 years ago," he says, "and we can't get it back in just two or three camps." The housing authority no longer receives YSP funds, but in 1996 it won a $50,000, 24-month historic preservation grant from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This funding and tribal support help finance the continuation of many activities.

Contact: Bud Biron
Drug Elimination/Youth Sports Program Manager
2218 Shunk Road
Sault Ste. Marie, MI 49783
Telephone: (906) 635-4975

Choctaw Boys & Girls Club Builds Bridges Among Community Youth

Until the Hollis Roberts Recreational Facility was built in 1996, the youth of the Choctaw Nation Housing Authority in remote southeast Oklahoma had few recreational opportunities that offered them positive alternatives to substance abuse. A 1994 Youth Sports Program (YSP) grant from HUD's Office of Native American Programs and contributions from the housing authority and the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma enabled the housing authority to build the youth center at the Belvin low-rent housing site, a multi-ethnic community including non-Indians and Native Americans from different tribes, located 2 miles outside Talihina, Oklahoma.

The "greatest success" of the youth center, according to Choctaw Nation Chief Hollis Roberts, for whom the recreational facility is named, is that it has united youth in the community. Before the center, non-Indian and Indian youth were "sort of segregated," Chief Roberts says. "Now they play baseball and computer games together. It has really united the community because now everyone feels like they are equal. I couldn't ask for anything better."

The center has brought Belvin many needed recreational opportunities such as sports, crafts, and field trips. Of the 60 households living there, the average annual income is $5,000, and 63 percent of adults have a high school education or less. Both the Choctaw and local law enforcement agencies agree that drug abuse and drug-related crime are significant problems in the 11 counties that the housing authority serves. Resident surveys at the target developments (Belvin, Bokoshe, and Red Oak) indicate that alcohol and drug abuse are prevalent. For example, 69 percent of respondents from the Bokoshe development reported that drugs were used in the home, and 40 percent of respondents from Belvin reported that they were using alcohol.

After the housing authority received the YSP grant, Chief Roberts suggested that the Boys & Girls Club might run the center's programs. Shelby Tidwell, the housing authority's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program coordinator, negotiated with the regional Boys & Girls Club organization to obtain a charter in 1995. In this way the housing authority was able to adopt what Tidwell believes is one of the most successful models of youth programming in the country. Furthermore, "as affiliates of a nationally known organization, it is easier for us to solicit donations," says Jimmy Smith, executive director of the Boys & Girls Club of the Choctaw Nation. "People know what the Boys & Girls Club is." The center opened in June 1996 and primarily serves 65 youth from the targeted developments, but any area youth may participate.

The 13,200-square-foot recreational facility contains a full-size gymnasium, a weight training and exercise room, a crafts room, and a recreation area with pool tables, ping-pong tables, and other games. A learning center is equipped with computers. There are also five staff offices and a full-size kitchen with a dining area. The center currently serves an average of 58 youth each day during the winter and 79 youth daily during the summer, Smith estimates. More than one-half are Native American. The center remains open to youth ages 5 to 19 until at least 6:30 p.m. Transporting the youth to the center can be a challenge. "In some ways our location is our biggest weakness," Smith comments on the 2-mile distance between Talihina and the center. After school, school buses and two tribally owned vans bring youth to the center. Parents are responsible for picking up their children at the end of the day.

Three full-time and one part-time paid staff members run all center programs following Boys & Girls Club principles and structure. They develop activities in six core areas: citizenship and leadership, cultural enrichment, social recreation, outdoor and environmental education, personal and educational development, and health and physical education. The goal is to provide constructive activities in a drug-free environment that help the youth become responsible citizens.

Sports such as basketball and baseball are an integral part of center activities. Three different age groups participate in the ongoing Nike Basketball Challenge. For an occasional treat, Smith takes the youth on field trips for skating or other recreational activities. Traditional arts and crafts are another popular activity. Community residents with expertise in native crafts often teach classes in beadwork, silversmithing, and other specialties.

"I believe that the confidence that the Indian children in particular gain at the center will help them excel academically," says Chief Roberts. A retired teacher visits the center daily to assist youth with their homework. Using distance learning capabilities, the teacher soon will be working with the students via computer. Smith is currently investigating online service providers for this purpose.

A local human services department provides substance abuse education programs. Smith is currently negotiating with the department to develop a program on inhalants, which he sees as a growing problem. Two younger people who attend the center were recently rushed to the emergency room because they had inhaled octane booster. Smith also wants to increase programs for older youth who attend center activities in small numbers and tend to get into more trouble. "We don't have a gang problem here, but we do have gang wannabes," he says.

Just as in Boys & Girls Clubs across the country, Hollis Roberts youth help plan activities. The Keystone Club, a leadership group of 12 youth who are age 13 and older, works on programs for their age group. They also help raise funds for special activities such as a trip to the regional Keystone Club meeting. Members of the Torch Club, who are age 12 and younger, perform a similar function. The Torch Club currently produces its own newsletter for communitywide distribution. "This showcases the kids' leadership skills and also gets the word out about club activities," Smith says.

The Hollis Roberts Recreational Facility has been so successful that the housing authority has decided to build another youth center with a second YSP grant that it received in 1995. The new center is currently under construction in Broken Bow, approximately 80 miles south of Talihina, near the Texas border. The housing authority has already obtained a Boys & Girls Club charter for this center.

Contact:

Jimmy Smith
Executive Director
Choctaw Nation Boys & Girls Club
Route 2, P.O. Box 1830
Talihina, OK 74571
Telephone: (918) 567-3498

Shelby Tidwell
Program Coordinator
Drug Elimination Project CHOICE
211 East Court Street, Suites 4 and 5
Atoka, OK 74525
Telephone: (405) 889-9181

Family Investment Center Trains Cherokee Nation for a High-Tech Future

The new Family Investment Center (FIC) of the Housing Authority of the Cherokee Nation (HACN), the second-largest Indian housing authority in the country, is helping residents improve their employability in the emerging high-tech workplace. Native American unemployment in Oklahoma is almost twice as high as the State average. Of HACN's adult residents, only 12 percent earn income from wages. Low levels of educational achievement compound this problem among the housing authority's 2,640 households that are spread across a sprawling 14-county area only slightly smaller than the State of Maryland. Only 38 percent of adult residents have earned a high school diploma.

The Family Investment Center, located in Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the capital of the Cherokee Nation and seat of Cherokee County, sponsors a 12-week course that teaches the essential computer software packages that residents need to navigate in today's knowledge-intensive labor market. "It is a good idea to get people to try to help themselves. It is a lot of hard work, but I do believe it will be worth it in the long run," comments Rondi Killer, who attended one of the first two classes.

"The skills taught at our Family Investment Center represent the future. It is an orientation in which our residents will enter the future with marketable job skills," says Joel R. Thompson, HACN executive director.

The computer class is off to a good start. The 32 people who enrolled in the first 2 classes have graduated. Approximately 60 percent of graduates have landed jobs with city government, the Cherokee Nation, a local hospital, the housing authority, or other organizations. "I have learned so much in this class that it will help me find a good job," says FIC participant Tammy Wagnon. "It also will enable me to make a better future for my family and myself."

Housing authority residents themselves pushed to develop FIC as a computer training center. "Always high on their list is additional training to give them the skills that will make them marketable in today's workplace," says Gary Ketcher, HACN's director of social services. A recent survey of residents indicated that a lack of job training/education and the unavailability of childcare are the biggest barriers to employment, followed by transportation difficulties, limited work experience, and low wages for jobs that are available. Resident interest in the computer class is high. More than 160 people applied to be in the first class that convened in March 1996. The class is limited to 16 students, and applicants are accepted into the class on a first-come, first-served basis.

To enroll, students must be at least 18 years old, be residents of HACN Mutual Self-Help or Low Rent housing within Cherokee County, and have a high school diploma or general equivalency diploma (GED). Enrollees also must be able to type 30 words per minute. To date, most participants have been women between the ages of 18 and 54 with a range of education and employment histories. Ketcher says he is "surprised at the number of unemployed college graduates who want to take the class."

A renovated former childcare facility houses FIC, which is financed by a 3-year Family Investment Center grant from HUD's Office of Native American Programs. Completed in December 1995, the center now contains a classroom equipped with 16 computer stations, a counseling center, and office space. Class participants who are tribal members may receive a stipend from the Cherokee Nation's On-the-Job Training, Youth Fair Chance, or Job Training Partnership Act programs. For the

small number of non-Indians in the class, FIC pays their stipend. Childcare is available to class participants on a sliding-fee scale through the James Danielson Children's Village, a childcare center operated by the Cherokee Nation.

The FIC coordinator developed the computer class curriculum through an exciting partnership with Northeastern State University (NSU) in Tahlequah, which was formerly the Cherokee Female Seminary. NSU also donates staff time to assess each participant's literacy, job skills, and career interests and to administer postclass testing. The full-time course covers keyboarding, DOS, and many software packages commonly used in business. The course prepares residents for business-forms management, commercial printing, publishing, or other careers. Someday the center may be able to prepare residents for careers in desktop publishing, medical records transcription, and ICD9 medical coding for the insurance industry, according to Ketcher.

"When these students graduate, they will be further ahead in computer skills than many of those people out there already working with computers," Tom Love, a computer teacher, commented at FIC's opening. "I've seen studies that show most people only use 20 percent of a program's capability. These people will be able to use 80 percent."

FIC offers other resources for applicants who do not meet the educational criteria for enrollment in the computer class. The NSU Literacy Center works with any applicant who does not meet the program's educational standards. Applicants may use the GED-preparation and keyboarding-tutorial software at FIC, which is available during weeks when the computer class is not in session. The software is also available in the neighboring counties' five literacy centers that were created in 1995 with a HUD Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program grant.

Participants learn more in the class than just computer skills. FIC coordinator Steve Edwards and area social service agencies make presentations to participants on parenting, nutrition, interviewing techniques, and dress. "We want to prepare them for anything that comes along so they'll know how to handle it or will know where to find the resources that can help," Edwards says.

Geographic distance may impede some residents from participating in the computer class. In the future Gary Ketcher would like to create a satellite FIC in each county served by the housing authority. To move toward that goal, HACN may make some of the computer class software available in the literacy centers. FIC is also broadening its focus to help residents who are already in the workforce. Starting in January 1997, FIC opened in the evenings for day workers to learn new computer skills or practice old ones under the instruction of a program graduate. When the FIC grant runs out in 1998, the housing authority will seek support to try to sustain the program through sources such as foundations, the Cherokee Nation, and NSU.

Contact:

Joel R. Thompson
Executive Director
P.O. Box 1007
Tahlequah, OK 74465
Telephone: (918) 456-5482

Gary Ketcher
Director of Social Services
P.O. Box 1007
Tahlequah, OK 74465
Telephone: (918) 453-2900

18 A

Leadership Training Helps Chickasaw Homeowners Improve Community

Resident activism—nurtured by HUD training—is making real changes at Woodbrook Estates outside Ada, Oklahoma. The evolution of the community center is one of the changes that makes Carla Martin, grant coordinator and former Woodbrook Estates Homeowners Association board chair, most proud. Where the community center stands—in the heart of this 59-home HUD homeownership development administered by the Chickasaw Housing Authority (CHA)—were overgrown vacant lots owned by a local bank.

The housing authority purchased three lots in 1994 and, with excess HUD Development funds, erected the community center on one of the lots. The two remaining lots were devoted to parking but were underutilized since most residents walk to the center. The association's board lobbied a tribal business to donate backboards, poles, and basketballs, and it transformed the parking lots into popular basketball courts.

The Woodbrook Estates Homeowners Association, established in 1992, has also lobbied the county to improve rural dirt and gravel roads, organized neighborhood clean-ups, planned youth activities, and arranged for grant writing and leadership training sessions. "When you represent a group, not just yourself, people listen more," Martin says. In 1993 the organization was awarded a $40,000 Resident Management Technical Assistance grant and another $60,000 Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) grant in 1995.

Woodbrook Estates is located in a rural area 6 miles outside of Ada. The Pontotoc County seat, Ada has a population of 17,500 and is headquarters of the Chickasaw Nation. Many of the 26 single household heads and 33 married couples who own the Woodbrook Estates' 3-bedroom homes commute to work in Ada—at CHA, tribal departments, or at the Carl Albert Indian Health Facility and other local businesses.

The popularity of the community center basketball courts with local youth—who number about 100 between ages 6 and 21—took on greater importance when compared with troubling incidents of juvenile substance abuse, vandalism, and other crimes, which seemed to be rising. Although precise statistics are not available, the CHA's application for Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) noted that police are called to the community as many as 15 times a week. Residents wanted to be able to offer local youth additional anti-drug activities. Martin—putting TOP-funded board training sessions in grant writing to use—helped the housing authority apply for PHDEP to fund activities and staff for Woodbrook Estates. As a result of the combined effort, a drug elimination coordinator began working out of the community center in 1996.

TOP resident board members meet monthly with the drug elimination staff to offer a resident perspective on programming. They also lend a hand wherever needed by sending out flyers to announce events and setting up before and cleaning up after activities. Board members have helped bring in drug prevention speakers and have chaperoned trips to the Chickasaw Community Center, police stations, and an area prison.

Martin, active with the homeowner association since 1992, was hired by the board in 1994 to coordinate the TOP grant for Woodbrook Estates. She says she never would have seen herself as a leader if not for the resident organization. Although she now interacts with housing authority staff on a regular basis, she admits, "I was really scared when I first had to speak to HUD people. I didn't know I could do it. The housing authority has always been very supportive and willing to provide technical assistance to our organization." Martin now serves on the board of commissioners for the Chickasaw Housing Authority.

Training sessions that outlined housing authority procedures and policies have also helped: "I know where to look for help, and I know more about what the housing authority can and cannot do." Martin has been able to use this knowledge to assist others in the community and help develop partnerships where none existed before.

A training and networking session in November 1996 demonstrated Martin's growing leadership skills. She helped arrange the meeting at the Chickasaw Housing Authority for Chickasaw, Cherokee, Sac and Fox, Absentee Shawnee, Choctaw, and Seminole Nation resident organizations and drug elimination coordinators working with TOP and PHDEP. "Everyone had been asking [HUD's Oklahoma Office Community Relations and Involvement Specialist] to get together. She asked me to help set it up with my housing authority since we have a good-sized conference room." Participants discussed non-Federal funding sources that may be available to resident organizations and housing authorities. Martin learned most, however, from the other 20 participants, some of whom traveled 3 hours to attend the meeting. "Our drug program is new," she says, "but I got ideas for activities we will want to do later.... As residents, we had many of the same frustrations—the difficulty in keeping people on the board and keeping residents involved." Residents with full-time jobs often find the board too time consuming and serve no more than a year—barely enough time to learn the ropes, Martin says. "People get intimidated when they learn all the responsibilities of a board member in a resident organization, but that's what the TOP grant training is for."

"By having a resident organization, we've been able to bring new services like the drug elimination program into the community," Martin says. For the future, she is "excited" that the board has the opportunity to hire a consultant to conduct an economic development feasibility study. The community might consider opening a small grocery. Because most shopping centers are in Ada, Woodbrook Estates' closest grocery is a convenience store 3 miles away. Martin says, "That is kind of far to go to pick up a loaf of bread or a gallon of milk."

Contact: Carla Martin
Grant Coordinator
Woodbrook Estates Homeowners Association
902 Arlington Center, #207
Ada, OK 74820
Telephone: (405) 332-3210

Bear Soldier Resident Organization Develops Young Entrepreneurs

"If the grasshoppers don't get us again," says Sandra Welch, Bear Soldier Resident Organization (BSRO) president, "the greenhouse project should be self-sufficient next year." This entrepreneurship program for Lakota youth in rural South Dakota, which mixes gardening with business development, is one of many initiatives undertaken by BSRO since it received $100,000 in Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) funds in 1994.

Bear Soldier is part of the Standing Rock reservation, which stretches over 850,000 square miles of North and South Dakota. Bear Soldier—population 750—immediately adjoins the non-Indian community of McLaughlin—population 300—and is 30 miles from Mobridge, where the reservation runs one of its two casinos. The casino employs fewer than 100 Lakota, and reservation unemployment ranges from 50 to 85 percent. Bear Soldier is 90 miles from Bismarck, North Dakota—"where the Wal-Mart is," Welch says. McLaughlin, she adds, has one grocery, four or five bars, and several liquor stores. To counter that influence, BSRO makes sure that housing authority residents and children have opportunities for drug- and alcohol-free activities.

"Residents took a while to trust that the resident organization wasn't out for their money," board member Francis White Mountain recalls. Monthly open meetings now regularly draw between 30 and 60 residents. BSRO represents 136 housing authority units with 550 Indian housing residents. The seven-member board hired a local consultant to offer monthly training sessions to board members and residents on developing policy and needs assessments. The 23-page assessment took 3 months and considerable resident input to develop. The BSRO board first implemented programs that ranked highest on the community assessment: an elderly council, a youth council, and a public safety program to combat vandalism.

Because of the safety program, residents now have improved access to ambulance and police services. The board established block captains in whose homes telephones were installed. Another dozen residents, who volunteer out of the resident organization office, have trained as emergency services dispatchers. The volunteer communications director organized dispatcher certification and obtained donations of boots, jackets, and flashlights.

The board also assisted approximately 50 elderly residents in instituting their own council. The board has organized other activities including bingo, a food pantry, and food and blanket drives. It chooses an elder of the month, who then meets with local children to share aspects of the Lakota culture.

The greenhouse entrepreneur project is an outgrowth of the youth council, which has 70 members ranging in age from 3 to 16 and 4 elected board members 10 to 12 years old. In 1995 the resident organization initiated an entrepreneurship program that works with preteenagers between the ages of 10 and 12.

During the first year, the program received a grant from the First Nations Development Institute, a Native-American-owned nonprofit organization promoting tribal self-reliance and control of assets. Program staff initially worked with young people on several projects to acquaint them with the expectations of the workplace. Welch says, "They didn't know how to punch in, didn't realize the importance of coming every day, on time." Working for "points" toward $55 program jackets, the young people sold houseplants, cultivated a community garden—donating the harvest to elderly

residents—and beautified a park by installing new benches and swings, painting trashcans, and planting flowers. Now, the participants earn points they can "spend" at the store at the Christian Children's Fund's Rainbow Project, a children and youth nutrition and cultural enrichment center. The store stocks donated goods from area stores and residents.

The next spring, with the $400 to $500 in profits from the year before, the program built a temporary greenhouse where participants seeded bedding plants. They designed marketing campaigns to see "what would sell in the area," Welch says. But before sales were properly under way, grasshoppers invaded the greenhouse. "Flowers were stripped to the stems," she says.

This year's new permanent greenhouse, built with funds from the anti-hunger nonprofit Share Our Strength, will be better able to withstand grasshoppers. The project will hire a paid supervisor to set up a vegetable sales stand where the young sales staff can learn to manage a business as well as to garden.

Through her involvement with the resident organization, Welch—formerly a hair stylist with no experience in community development or organizing—has learned how to write applications that have won smaller grants that supplement the resident organization's initiatives. Welch received an award from HUD in 1996 for her work with the resident organization. She was recently named executive director of the Rainbow Project. The Rainbow Project rents program space in the resident organization's newly renovated building—leased from the tribe—on McLaughlin's Main Street, six blocks from the Bear Soldier housing development.

BSRO has completed the projects proposed in its TOP application with funding and time to spare and is drafting initiatives to address other resident concerns: economic development, cultural programs, and housing. Board members have met with Habitat for Humanity to discuss housing initiatives and are also developing a small business incubator for residents. In addition, BSRO will soon take over the resident services contract from the housing authority. Tasks will include rent collection, pesticide spraying, and community education.

"We are doing a lot of the services already," Welch says. "We'll be getting paid for it now." A five-person resident board, set up by the Bear Soldier board, will oversee the contract. When Standing Rock Housing Authority begins construction on 64 HUD homeownership homes in Bear Soldier soon, the resident organization will conduct a first-generation homeowner orientation.

Contact: Sandra Welch
President
Bear Soldier Resident Organization
P.O. Box 565
McLaughlin, SD 57642
Telephone: (605) 823-4638

Crow Program "Counts Coup" Against Drugs

Drawing on traditional tribal culture and family-based values, the Crow Tribal Housing Authority (CTHA) launched its Crow Counting Coup on Drugs in 1992, with a $129,000 grant from HUD's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP).

"Ours is a 'we' concept, not an 'I' concept—we do it together," says Ada Bends, drug elimination program coordinator. "Once you go with that concept, things begin to happen. Listening and respecting comes back twofold in program accomplishments." The comprehensive program covers prevention, enforcement, and treatment activities. It involves building intergenerational leadership and drawing on cultural traditions on this south-central Montana reservation, where 40 percent of its 5,000 residents still speak Crow.

The Crow Counting Coup on Drugs PHDEP started because of serious concern among tribal members and officials about the high rates of substance abuse problems and related crime in the early 1990s, especially within CTHA's housing clusters. An estimated 40 percent of the population was engaged in alcohol or drug abuse—with alcohol considered a gateway to drug use. An influx of drugs was flowing along Interstate 70, which crosses the Crow Reservation between Billings, Montana, and Sheridan, Wyoming, and understaffed Indian and county law enforcement officials could do little to counter it.

CTHA needed to develop a road map for reaching its initial goal: to marshal new leadership among Crow youth and adults for a war against drug use. To begin building a strategy, Bends met with elders to listen to their ideas. In keeping with the Crow way of life, the program involved elders and families together, from the first. Bends called a large meeting of agencies—including the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), Indian Health Service, Big Horn County Law Enforcement, and social service providers—that developed ideas and a commitment to work together. She visited schools, colleges, agencies, and individual residents to gather support and encourage participation.

A consensus emerged that the strength needed to fight drugs lay within their own culture and that the program should use every possible avenue to build pride based on Crow culture, including music, arts and crafts, sports, school-based clubs, and camping. For example, the Black Canyon Youth Camp (a facility owned and maintained by the Crow Nation) enabled the Crow Counting Coup on Drugs program to host 150 youth for 5 days to learn traditional Crow sports—such as barrel racing—and to learn from local and national role models. Programs emphasized living a healthy lifestyle and gaining skills to enable Crow youth to be successful in both Indian and non-Indian society.

The Crow Counting Coup on Drugs program also trained tribal elders in drug awareness and intervention, so that they could convey the effects of illegal drugs and drug-related crime in the Crow language. Their messages emphasized cultural values, family involvement, and self-worth.

Early on in the process, a young drum keeper of the Black Whistle drum group, Darrin Old Coyote, and three other youth, approached Bends saying, "We're responsible, our age group, for keeping the culture alive. We are the role models." As a result, together with Bends and others, Old Coyote and his friends developed a drug awareness and cultural program of singing, dancing, songs, and

education, celebrating Crow culture. The program, called "Our Way of Life," received wide recognition and appeared at the National Drug Elimination and Crime Prevention Conference in Keshena, Wisconsin, in 1995 and at other national events.

Crow PHDEP staff work with the school clubs that foster youth leadership, emphasizing good grades, no drugs, and the importance of being role models. Drug awareness conferences occur each year in each of the four schools on the reservation. The Crow Nation Youth Council has provided hands-on leadership experience for 300 youth from across the reservation. Youth Council members act as mentors and role models to younger children, do community service, and plan alcohol- and drug-free dances. They learn parliamentary procedure and leadership skills by practicing them at monthly meetings.

"We find people who really love youth," says Bends. She seeks people who are committed to go out to others and really listen to their concerns, which generates many good ideas. For example, with encouragement from the PHDEP coordinator, the Deaconess Medical Center in Billings helped youth learn about diabetes by arranging for them to talk to dialysis patients and a tribal herbalist who explained the use of natural roots in treatment.

PHDEP has made possible stronger intervention and enforcement activities to deal with the drug and crime problem. Among PHDEP staff members is an investigator who works closely with the Crow Tribal Police Department, BIA Criminal Investigators, and the Big Horn County Sheriff's Department, to address drug-related problems in housing cluster neighborhoods. To facilitate enforcement, a drug paraphernalia section was added to the Tribal Code. The PHDEP investigator has built trust among residents, and drug reporting has increased. In the first 6 months of the investigator's work, there were 18 arrests, 15 indictments, and 26 new cases initiated.

The Crow Counting Coup on Drugs PHDEP has extended its outreach beyond its modest beginnings with a $129,000 HUD Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program grant through interagency cooperation and in-kind donations. Its success has helped CTHA obtain a fourth grant in the amount of $250,000. By the end of the project, according to Bends, all Crow Tribal Housing residents will have had the opportunity to participate in programs aimed at preventing drug use and related crime, and 99 percent of reservation families will have heard regular, consistent, drug-free messages from the Crow Tribal Housing Authority. Bends also estimates that 200 youth will join a Crow Community Improvement Committee to promote self-empowerment and positive lifestyles and that more than 2,000 youth will actively promote drug prevention through participation in school conferences, intergenerational exchanges, and drug-free sports and cultural events.

Contact: Ada Bends
Drug Elimination Program Coordinator
P.O. Box 99, Circle Lane 1
Crow Agency, Montana 59022
Telephone: (406) 638–2665

J-Ki-Pi Stretches Funds for Youth Sports and Drug Elimination at Fort Berthold

In September 1996 youth from the Fort Berthold Reservation in Mandaree, North Dakota, played basketball with members of the Atlanta Hawks National Basketball Association (NBA) team as part of youth sports activities of the Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program. Called I-Ki-Pi ("Pipe of Peace" in the Hidatsa language), this project brought together 1,400 young people from 4 schools in 5 concurrent sessions that included anti-drug messages and a chance to play 4-on-1 basketball with a real NBA player. If the youth team won, each member would receive a pair of basketball shoes.

"When I went to a HUD Youth Sports Program workshop in August 1996, I met someone who knew the Hawks' manager," recalls Recreation Director Jarret Baker. "I called him back, and we set the visit up." Participating schools and the tribes' Circle of Life Youth Alcoholism Program chipped in to pay for the airplane tickets, the only expense for the Hawks team members' visit.

The Hawks' trip received extensive coverage in the local and national media. "It was a great motivator for kids to see themselves on national TV," Baker reports. The NBA visit was just one part of the Fort Berthold program that has stretched Federal resources to provide drug-free recreational and educational youth activities. Substance abuse is a serious problem in the six communities and three tribes—Arikara, Hidatsa, and Mandan—of this rural reservation, where many families are poor. Overall, unemployment ranges between 57 and 75 percent, rising as high as 99 percent in winter. Most families rely on Government assistance, and 72 percent live in mutual self-help or rental housing managed by the Fort Berthold Housing Authority (FBHA). Fort Berthold has a young population; 26 percent of the reservation's 5,100 persons are 17 years old or younger. But many of these youth show signs of losing hope. For example, the dropout rate has reached 53 percent in some schools.

With limited economic opportunity, risk of substance abuse is high. Of the 1,770 arrests the Bureau of Indian Affairs law enforcement made at Fort Berthold in 1995, almost 91 percent were drug and alcohol related. Among juvenile arrests 97 percent were related to drugs and alcohol. A tribally sponsored survey found that a majority of students in grades 7 through 12 reported using drugs at least once.

However, there are encouraging signs of progress. Youth arrests in 1994 were 24 percent lower than in 1993, the year FBHA first received a Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program grant. The I-Ki-Pi project provides sports programs for all reservation children and operates the Three Tribes Youth Council, the annual Young Nations Cultural Camp, and the Three Tribes Youth Center—started with a $125,000 grant from HUD's Youth Sports Program in 1993.

"We build on successes," says Baker. "We look for people in other places who are doing what we want to accomplish and learn from them. It's important for the kids to be active."

In 1996 the America Youth Soccer Organization (AYSO) was introduced to the three affiliated tribes through Northern Plains' Office of Native American Programs' Community Relations and Involvement programs. AYSO is a national organization that promotes soccer as a way to build self-confidence and a positive self-image among youth. For example, it requires that every child play at least half of every game. AYSO trained coaches and officials, set up a youth soccer board of volunteers, provided registration software, and contributed uniforms and balls for the first year. More than 150 players competed in soccer, with each of Fort Berthold's 6 communities fielding 2 teams.

Another I-Ki-Pi project, the Three Tribes Youth Center in downtown New Town, provides an alcohol- and drug-free place for 200 to 300 young people each week to meet, learn about their culture, use a computer, or find a quiet place to study. I-Ki-Pi moved two military surplus modular homes to reservation-owned lots and renovated them to make the 4,800-square-foot center. The center is open 5 nights a week, with Wednesday reserved for traditional cultural activities. It also hosts special events such as dances. Three Tribes Youth Center also expects to serve 1,000 persons each year as a center for comprehensive services.

Three Tribes Youth Council members, a leadership group of 12 elected young people representing each of the 6 Fort Berthold communities, receive "Futures Through Leadership" training and serve as peer trainers of other youth. Each community also has a local youth council. With substantial support from their families, who often provide transportation, youth council members meet twice a month to promote healthy, drug-free lifestyles and help their peers cope with the many issues of their daily lives, such as poverty, violence, school problems, and health difficulties. The youth council plans drug- and alcohol-free activities and raises funds to support them, including a recent basketball tournament that raised $5,000. The council also sponsors the annual Fort Berthold Youth Pow Wow, the Fort Berthold Drum Group, the Fort Berthold Indian Dance Troupe, and the Young Nations Cultural Camp.

Three Tribes Youth Council members serve as camp counselors in the summer cultural camp. This camp gives 115 children in grades 7 through 12 the opportunity to live for 3 days in tipis while playing Native American games, participating in ceremonies, listening to elders tell traditional stories, and learning traditional skills such as setting up tipis and sweat lodges. Campers also learn about current topics such as drug and alcohol prevention, HIV/AIDS, teen pregnancy, and how to deal with peer pressure. The cultural camp agenda also includes swimming, canoeing, and games.

Because the need for positive alternatives is so great, the Fort Berthold Housing Authority intends to continue the I-Ki-Pi project even if Federal funding ends. State agencies and private foundations such as The Casey Family Program currently are partners in various components of the project. Project leaders hope to set up a youth center in each of the reservation's six communities.

Contact: Jarret Baker
Recreational Coordinator/Youthsports Director, I-Ki-Pi Project
P.O. Box 310
New Town, ND 58763
Telephone: (701) 627-4415

Navajo Resident Group Tackles Management Responsibilities

In February 1997 the Tsel Bahaa Resident Management Corporation (TBRMC) in Arizona scored a first among Indian housing authorities. The resident management corporation (RMC) took over responsibility for managing Navajo Housing Authority (NHA) units at White Cone and Jeddito in the sagebrush and piñon covered mesas of Northern Arizona. Although among public housing authorities, about 100 resident organizations have entered into contracts to take on some aspect of the management of their developments, signing a management contract with an Indian housing authority was "brand new territory—it had never been done before," says Doyle Hughes, executive director of TBRMC.

"We do everything the management office would do and has done in the past," Hughes says. He and a staff of three others are now handling tenant applications, certifications, recertifications, rent collections, and maintenance. They currently manage 31 low-rent units (20 at White Cone and 11 at Jeddito) and 8 mutual self-help homeownership units at White Cone. Soon they will also manage 55 additional units currently under development. TBRMC will receive approximately $150,000 the first year from NHA to perform its work. The transfer of responsibility has brought greater local control, new jobs, and management training that could facilitate further economic development in this rugged, remote area.

The management team is composed of Hughes; Rickie Clinton, an occupancy specialist and housing counselor; a maintenance engineer; and a secretary. Hughes, who is not Indian, married a Navajo from the area and came to the executive directorship with a background in banking. Clinton, who grew up in the area, was TBRMC's first president.

Jobs generated by the resident management program are all the more important because of the area's remoteness. People who live in White Cone drive 15 miles to the nearest gas station and 50 miles to the nearest grocery store. White Cone lies 75 miles west of Window Rock, seat of the central government of the Navajo Nation, and 120 miles east of the nearest big city, Flagstaff. Jeddito is 20 miles from White Cone.

The idea of an RMC at Tsel Bahaa started 2 years ago, says Hughes, when Bessie Tsosie, Geneva Bigthumb, and others from the Navajo Housing Authority "came out and told us what an RMC was and what a TOP grant was." Since then, residents have worked hard to make TBRMC a reality, but success would not have been possible without the continued mentoring of the housing authority.

"When we began, we had great aspirations," Hughes recalls, "but were not ready to attain them. We had to go through a period of training and adjustment." Formed in February 1995, the future TBRMC received its first funding in November 1995, a $100,000 Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) grant from HUD. Only 1 year later, the organization completed a 90-day dual management period with NHA and began management operations on its own.

The starting point for negotiations with the housing authority was HUD's model resident management contract. It immediately became clear, however, that the model developed for resident management in public housing did not match the Indian housing environment in several aspects.

"A lot of things in there didn't fit our situation," Hughes says. The model contract referred to HUD's PHMAP management indicators, for example, which public housing uses but Indian housing does

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

not. Complicated legal requirements and sovereignty issues arose, such as reconciling Indian and Section 3 preferences for employment and contracting. Financial management and insurance procedures had to be hammered out. "It took us 9 months to wade through these details," Hughes recalls.

"I guarantee you we heard a lot of 'no's,'" says Hughes. "But 'no' doesn't always mean 'no.' It might mean 'not in that form,' or 'not in that manner,' or 'I don't know enough to tell you 'yes.' You have to be willing to fight out the hard spots.'"

"It was really a learning experience," Rickie Clinton says. "I've never been involved in business management or economic development before." Before taking on the leadership of the RMC and beginning management training, "I looked at it as something that would really be intimidating to me," he admits. "Now, I've learned a lot. It's not really that hard if you put your mind to it.... As a resident, I now have a say in how I want my housing to be set up and run."

Receiving management training has made a big difference in his life. Clinton reports, "Before I moved to the housing area, I was pretty much your average high school graduate Indian" with a passive attitude toward government support. "After going through all this resident training and learning about the business, I realize that self-sufficiency is where it counts."

Says Clinton, "I am 43 years old and have barely started learning. Sometimes I sit in my office and wonder what I might have done if this had been available to me when I got out of high school."

Resident management is "not for everyone," Hughes acknowledges. "It requires dedication to a goal. There is a lot of work involved. But if you have goals and drive, you can accomplish what we have accomplished."

Today, TBRMC's books are in the black. Hughes reports, "We still have $40,000 of our TOP grant left." The group is looking ahead to new challenges. Tsel Bahaa is currently working on an economic development package with Head Start, the White Cone chapter of the Navajo tribe, NHA, and other partners to build a $6 million recreation facility for White Cone. The group envisages community meeting rooms, a gymnasium, and office space for support services. The facility would also house a daycare center, making it easier for residents to hold down jobs.

Contact: Doyle Hughes, Executive Director
Tsel Bahaa Resident Management Corporation
P.O. Box 3538
Indian Wells, AZ 96031
Telephone: (520) 654–3269

Northern Circle Builds Communities To Resist Drugs

Since Northern Circle Indian Housing Authority (NCIHA) in northern California began its drug elimination program in 1991, the norm has changed. Tribal celebrations and events that used to include alcohol now are advertised as alcohol and drug free, and the new norm is honored. If people do show up with alcohol or drugs, others gently ask them to respect the rule.

"I see people taking those stands now," says Gayle Zepeda, community organizer in the Community Resources Department of NCIHA. "Children say, 'I am proud of being drug free.' It is part of their vernacular."

NCIHA created its drug elimination program to serve its 12 Indian tribes living in small, federally recognized enclaves known as rancherias. These small sections of land, unique to California, are held in trust by the Federal Government for the benefit of a specific tribe or group of Native Americans. The NCIHA rancherias are scattered in isolated rural areas over five counties in northern California, mostly in Mendocino County. The areas average only a few hundred residents, and American Indians make up only about 5 percent of the total population. The rancherias' sizes and locations place residents within the reach of outside influences, including alcohol, drugs, and crime, with few indigenous resources to combat them. Zepeda notes that this area has been called "the emerald triangle" because marijuana crops grow well here.

Crime related to drugs and alcohol has soared in the area. Over the past 5 years, the number of drug-abusing offenders increased by 65 percent in Mendocino County. Adult drug arrests rose from 295 in 1991 to 690 in 1993. Juvenile arrests more than quadrupled from 20 to 94 during the same period. A Mendocino County needs assessment found that Native Americans see drugs as a serious problem and a cause of violence and crime in their communities. They rate environmental factors such as poverty and culture shock as the primary causes of substance abuse. The Consolidated Tribal Health Project reported, "In Mendocino County the problem is of such epidemic proportions that those knowledgeable believe that 100 percent of the Native American children are in some major way affected by this problem."

"The social changes are significant, but take time," says NCIHA's executive director Darlene Tooley. "But support for the drug elimination program is overwhelming." Each year of NCIHA's participation in HUD's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program has built upon the previous year's successes. The first step was to break the silence about the problem with an awareness campaign within the NCIHA Board of Commissioners and the Indian housing communities. After the problem of substance abuse was acknowledged, residents began to discuss openly the issues related to drug abuse—its impact on families and communities. Tribes formed local prevention committees. Addressing drug and alcohol problems became part of the tribal agendas. NCIHA increased security through physical improvements such as fencing and lighting in its housing communities.

Breaking the silence allowed tribal leaders to work with outside law enforcement officials to deal with drug-related problems. California rancherias operate under a shared law enforcement arrangement in which the county sheriff has criminal jurisdiction but the tribe deals with civil matters. This division of responsibilities has led to confusion, distrust on both sides, and some hesitancy by sheriff's departments to come onto tribal land. These problems are compounded by distance and the time (as

much as an hour) it takes to reach the rancherias. Already stretched sheriff's departments are reluctant to devote resources to a minor offense such as simple possession, but without such convictions the housing authority has difficulty evicting tenant offenders. NCIHA is working to erase years of misunderstanding and lack of communication by developing memorandums of understanding between tribal councils and sheriff's departments and by co-creation of Neighborhood Watch programs.

Northern Circle has strengthened its partnership with county social service agencies. Formerly, those agencies offered little interaction or outreach to the small, isolated Native American communities. For example, NCIHA has worked to increase understanding by mainstream social service agencies of Native American issues by joining the CommunityWorks Coalition of Mendocino County for substance abuse prevention and by conducting monthly meetings with all agencies involved in the drug elimination program. NCIHA also has contributed money to prevention programs within tribal health clinics that assisted in establishing Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) groups. On four rancherias residents have established Red Road Recovery Groups to support people in recovery from substance abuse.

Today NCIHA emphasizes prevention education, using community-building and empowerment techniques. Community building is needed because NCIHA recently built houses that doubled the population at some sites, bringing together people who had never lived together. NCIHA's community organizing project is working with each neighborhood to develop a shared vision about the kind of community in which residents want to live and have their children grow up.

NCIHA's current prevention program provides employment training—including job readiness, onsite general equivalency diploma (GED) and computer-training classes, and referrals to higher education. When NCIHA offered a four-session parenting class, it arranged to have Mendocino College grant one college credit hour for participants. The college has found that starting higher education even in such a small way encourages people to start down the path to a full academic degree.

In 1996–97 NCIHA will host 4-day Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) events in three counties in collaboration with local tribal health clinics and the American Indian Training Institute—a nonprofit organization formed to provide consultation and training for drug abuse prevention and rehabilitation for American Indian tribes. Developed as culturally specific training for the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, GONA uses a holistic approach to prevention that provides a framework for capacity building, community healing, and action planning. Its curriculum—based on Native American values of belonging, mastery, interdependence, and generosity—models collaboration and community empowerment.

NCIHA is developing a youth leadership association that will diffuse skills such as conflict resolution, effective communication, and team building. The association will help plan prevention activities for youth and work with local schools to develop a tricounty youth leadership conference.

Contact: Gayle Zepeda
Community Organizer
694 Pinoleville Drive
Ukiah, CA 95482
Telephone: (707) 468–1336

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Resident Council Establishes Recreation Center for Makah Youth

The isolation that attracts hikers and fishermen to the rugged and beautiful coastline of Washington's Olympic Peninsula poses difficulties for members of the Makah Nation who live on this westernmost American Indian reservation in the lower 48 States. Seventy-five miles from Port Angeles and 150 miles from Seattle, the community of 1,800 faces many challenges. About one-half of all households are unemployed, and in the winter that figure rises to 60 percent. In a community needs assessment conducted several years ago, nearly 70 percent of adult Makah reported that an immediate family member had a substance abuse problem.

Young people with limited social outlets, envisioning little opportunity to develop jobs skills or find jobs, also can fall prey to behavioral and school problems and substance abuse. During the 1995–96 school year, 5 percent of the 148 Makah children attending grades 7 through 12 dropped out of school, and 22 percent were known or suspected to have a drug abuse problem.

The Makah Resident Council is reversing this situation by broadening young people's options for positive, drug-free activities. In 1993 the 11-member resident council used the bulk of a $100,000 Tenant Opportunities Program/Resident Management Technical Assistance Grant (TOP/RMTAG) to develop a recreational facility for youth

"Our community is in the middle of nowhere," says Cheryl Clark, a former member of the Makah Resident Council Board and current executive director of the Makah Housing Authority. "There's nothing for kids to do. We don't have movie theaters. We don't have places to roller skate."

The 2,100-square-foot building houses two pool tables, air hockey and foos ball tables, four computers with educational software, and three televisions with Nintendo software. A movie corner contains a television set with VCR, a coffee table, and comfortable sofas. The center hosts after-school activities such as dancing, basketry, Girl Scouts, carving, drum making, and classes in ancestral language and culture.

The tribe donates use of a baseball field and a gymnasium where young people participate in basketball, volleyball, baseball, t-ball, and softball games and tournaments. HUD's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) and Youth Sports Program also help fund an extensive sports program.

The recreation center facility staff operate a snack bar from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. The council invests snack bar income in sporting equipment or in field trips to the zoo, the circus, the Seattle Science Center, canoeing, swimming, movies, and popular trips to attend Seattle Mariners' baseball games. The housing authority raised funds to purchase several vans to make these treks that "require driving a minimum of 150 miles round-trip and take approximately 8–10 hours," as the tribe wrote in a recent application to HUD.

A recreation center drug prevention specialist, hired in 1995 through a PHDEP grant, offers children and their families assistance with substance abuse problems. "Treating children's needs also meant treating the entire family," Clark explains. The specialist enlists parents as chaperones for youth activities and helps them overcome educational and employment barriers that may leave

them vulnerable to substance abuse. The drug prevention specialist may help parents fill out job applications or refer them to social services such as food stamps, counseling, or substance abuse treatment. The specialist also educates families about substance abuse.

In another effort to combat substance abuse problems, the housing authority manages two subcontractor positions that the resident council oversees—the drug investigator and the school liaison. Once funded by PHDEP, the drug investigator is now partially funded by the Makah Tribal Organization. Working in coordination with Makah Tribal Council police, the drug investigator looks into alleged incidents of drug abuse or sales affecting private or HUD-owned housing and patrols the community to discourage drug-related offenses. An average of five cases are under investigation at any one time.

With the goal of improving troubled students' attendance and school performance, the school liaison connects parents and students who live in Makah Housing Authority units with the Cape Flattery school district. She provides substance abuse education, counsels children with academic or behavioral problems, conducts home visits, refers students for needed services, and works with children who have attendance problems. The liaison also coordinates after-school activities and a mentoring program. Drawing from the entire community, the mentoring program pairs local role models with youth who are at risk because of difficulties at school or at home.

Teenagers are not only participants in community, fundraising, and recreational activities. Clark makes clear, "They are also partners." The Makah Resident Council and area youth host an annual drug prevention workshop at Neah Bay High School to stimulate discussion and raise awareness in the entire community. High school students have taken the lead in planning the workshop, designing the agenda, setting up activities, and contacting speakers. The 1995 workshop featured speakers on grief and loss, higher education, anger management, Alateen, tribal law and order, sports and drugs, and Makah tribal operations. Impressed by the workshop's ability to harness the talents and enthusiasm of local youth, staff from a neighboring school 30 miles away decided to let its students undertake a similar workshop.

The resident council plans to expand its successful programs and move into new areas of need such as daycare. The resident council has already seen great changes, Clark says. When she was a member of the Makah Resident Council 3 years ago, the new recreational center served only 10 children a week. In this community with 350 children and youth between the ages of 5 and 21, boys and girls visit the center 1,500 to 2,000 times a month. The resident council has recently applied for a charter to open a Boys & Girls Club. The council is also developing a short-term job training program to offer teenagers supervised employment at the recreational center where they will work at the snack bar, supervise the activity of other children in the gymnasium, and coach sports.

Contact: Cheryl Clark
Executive Director
P.O. Box 88
Neah Bay, WA 98357
Telephone: (360) 645-2705

Resident Organization Connects Urban Puyallup to Services

Indian housing residents of the Puyallup Nation, one of the most urban reservations in the United States, have organized as the Northeast Resident Organization (NERO) to bring needed services across town to residents' doorsteps. Isolated from other Tacoma Puyallup Indians and from the non-Indian neighborhood surrounding the housing development, "the resident organization didn't realize it could attract services," instead of "residents always having to go somewhere else," says Shirley Bennett, NERO program coordinator.

The Puyallup Nation's land consists of 900 acres of sites in Tacoma and nearby cities and towns in Washington State. When the 27 Indian housing rental units were constructed in 1989, residents of the adjoining non-Indian middle-class section of northeast Tacoma protested, and tensions continue between American Indian and non-Indian populations. Fifteen of these townhouse-style apartments were either damaged by vandals or left unrepaired when tenants moved out and need renovation before anyone can move in.

Rates of unemployment, crime, gang activity, and substance abuse in the Puyallup's northeast development are higher than in the surrounding area or in Tacoma generally. More than half of adult residents are unemployed. In 1995 tribal police responded to 90 incidents—including assault, burglary, child abuse, property damage, and drug abuse—at this housing community with 45 residents. In contrast tribal police recorded 112 incidents among the 174 residents of the housing authority's homeownership units at three adjacent eastside sites.

At the Puyallup's main site, in a low-income section of eastern Tacoma—"Eight miles away across railroad tracks, bridges, and a busy industrial area," Bennett emphasizes—lie the Puyallup Housing Authority, the Medicine Creek Tribal College, other tribal administrative and social services, and the tribe's 23 units of HUD homeownership housing. Residents in the northeast cannot easily access these services: The closest bus, which picks up residents almost 2 miles from the development, does not go there. Distance, Bennett says, has created something of an "out of sight, out of mind" attitude that decreases the seriousness given to resident requests.

Residents established NERO in 1996 with a Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) award of $100,000. Novice board members first learned to conduct meetings and develop a mission statement and brochure. They held a successful open house to introduce themselves to Tacoma's social service community, including other organizations active in the development, such as the U.S. Department of Justice's Safe Streets Campaign and the Community/Family Resource Program.

After surveying residents about their needs and estimating costs of desired projects, the board voted to concentrate TOP money on developing educational programs and offering activities for children and youth.

NERO's board reflects the community's low educational levels: None of the five resident board members has attended school beyond the fifth grade. NERO negotiated with the Medicine Creek Tribal College to conduct onsite general equivalency diploma (GED), tutoring, and life skills classes. Because single mothers comprise 98 percent of household heads in the development, daycare was key to increasing class participation. To maximize participation, NERO won resident approval to subcontract for childcare rather than have a resident miss classes to provide daycare. Residents, the resident organization, and the college also made attendance requirements more flexible to accommodate family emergencies.

Over the past year, the resident organization has operated in an unoccupied Indian rental apartment and has made part of this space available for the Kwawachee Mental Health program to provide onsite grief or self-esteem counseling for young residents between the ages of 3 and 16. Tribal police have opened a satellite office in the same apartment. Later these two groups, along with Safe Streets, NERO, and others, plan to move into a former group home currently under renovation, thanks to grants from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Native Americans and the Puyallup Nation Housing Authority to the Community/Family Resource Program. NERO will manage this new center.

NERO also established and oversees a youth council. The youth council has helped the adult resident organization run garage and bake sale fundraisers and made snacks for the adult board meetings. The council members aged 10 to 12 can now develop bylaws, conduct effective and orderly meetings, and "prepare a budget to provide activities for all young people—not just the older ones on the council," Bennett says proudly. To fund additional activities, the youth council opened a snack bar where young employees practice business skills such as sales, management, and inventory control.

As part of NERO, board members have traveled beyond Tacoma. They have established relationships and youth exchanges with other Washington tribes such as the Lummi and Makah. Attending the Circle of Four Nations Resident Management Organization training in Las Vegas recently, board members solicited advice from other more experienced Native-American resident leaders on sustaining organizational momentum and working effectively with housing authorities.

NERO has established the foundation of a productive relationship with the housing authority, managing activities for the housing authority's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) grant and opening lines of communication through monthly meetings. However, some questions remain unanswered. Bennett says residents wonder why the housing authority has not responded to their requests to renovate the empty rental units. Part of the problem, Bennett suggests, was that housing authority staff may not have realized that NERO intends to continue advocating for improved community services like the onsite GED classes.

But having seen what they can accomplish together, board members are determined to keep NERO functioning even though they have staffing concerns. When NERO reached the $20,000 TOP funding limit for salaries, it had to lay off Bennett, the paid program coordinator. She continues as a part-time volunteer, but services are limited. The northeast development's four new computers are currently available only twice a week when NERO staff can find a volunteer supervisor.

One solution may be for NERO to continue managing drug elimination activities with the housing authority since the PHDEP grant includes funding for staff positions. Along with other Washington tribes, NERO also plans to apply to establish a regional resident management organization to fund coordinated training or cultural activities.

Contact: Kandy Sharp, Chairperson
Northeast Resident Organization
6301 21st Street, NE
Tacoma, WA 98422
Telephone: (206) 927-1815
or
Shirley Bennett, Program Coordinator (volunteer)
Telephone: (206) 597-6200, ext. 298

Aleutian Housing Authority Fights Drugs With Scouting and DARE

To prevent substance abuse among the young people in its 10 communities in the Pribilof and Aleutian Island chains, the Aleutian Housing Authority (AHA), located on Alaska's western peninsula, draws on the expertise of three nationally recognized youth programs: DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), the Boy Scouts, and the Girl Scouts.

"Our villages are very isolated, and our youth have little to do outside of school. There are serious problems with drugs and alcohol in many villages," says Kris N. Anderson, AHA's executive director. But the programs AHA has started with its 1995 and 1996 Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) grants from HUD's Office of Native American Programs are making a difference. "Now a lot of kids are caught up in earning their merit badges and are taking a greater interest in the environment. Structured activities are keeping them away from alcohol and other self-destructive behaviors," he adds.

AHA's 308 units are located in communities with populations ranging from 70 to 4,000 people, spanning a vast distance of 1,000 miles. Most of the islands can be reached only by air. Official unemployment figures are often very low in these communities, according to the Alaska Department of Community and Regional Affairs, but large numbers of adults are not even in the workforce.

Alcohol abuse and alcoholism are major problems in western Alaska, according to a 1994 survey of 120 health workers, locally elected officials, and others. The area produces the highest number of cases for the Statewide Drug Enforcement Unit, according to a 1995 report from the Alaska State Troopers. Substance abuse problems have appeared in AHA communities. "We have had, during the past 2 years, a couple of near deaths with our young people within the age range of 11 to 14 who had overdosed on alcohol," says Della Trumble, a member of the King Cove Resident Organization. Several factors contribute to the prevalence of substance abuse in AHA properties, according to the housing authority, which cites a lack of understanding about the negative effects of drug use, low self-esteem, a lack of respect for self and others, a need to belong, boredom, and the availability of drugs and alcohol.

Community youth are responding enthusiastically to DARE and scouting. Sand Point, located halfway down the Aleutian Peninsula, is home to the DARE program. Twenty-one fifth and sixth graders out of a total enrollment of 150 students at the Sand Point K–12 School are participating. The Boy Scouts have achieved a total membership of 54 in the communities of Akutan, Atka, Nelson Lagoon, Saint George Island, and Saint Paul Island. The Girl Scouts have attracted 83 new members in the target communities, more than tripling their goal of 25.

"The Aleutian Housing Authority is delighted to be involved in this program [DARE]," Anderson says. DARE is a nationally recognized drug abuse prevention program originally designed by the Los Angeles Police Department and Unified School District to equip elementary school children with skills for resisting peer pressure to experiment with alcohol, tobacco, or drugs. It gives special attention to fifth- and sixth-grade students to prepare them for the pressures of their teen years.

Officer Mark Jurgens of the Sand Point Police Department presents the DARE program in 17 weekly 1-hour lessons. Jurgens received DARE training in Oklahoma City in early 1996, where he was rated the top officer in his class. PHDEP funds paid for his training and travel. DARE teaches protecting personal safety, developing resistance techniques, building self-esteem, managing stress, building a

support system, and making decisions. Jurgens uses teaching strategies that emphasize student participation, including role-playing and group discussion. Sand Point's DARE program has received support from the school district, Native corporations, tribal associations, and other grants. Jurgens expanded the DARE program to the community of False Pass in early 1997 after several weather-related delays.

Still in its startup phase and often hampered by poor weather, some of the Aleutian Boy Scout and Cub Scout troops are not yet holding regular meetings, but they have sponsored some special events. For example, the Saint Paul Island troop went camping in November 1996. Young scouts hiked, built fires, studied the stars, worked with maps and compasses, and listened to a presentation on drug abuse. In December 1996 the Nelson Lagoon troop traveled to Anchorage to visit local schools and museums and to camp. During the campout the scouts—most of whom had never traveled away from the Aleutian Peninsula before—participated in sledding, snowshoeing, and ice fishing with other scouts from across the State. Housing authority staff believe that Aleutian youth will benefit broadly from the self-confidence, positive expectations, and personal integrity that the Boy Scout organization develops in its members.

AHA also has high hopes for the Girl Scouts. This organization deals with drug awareness through Health and Fitness badges and a new Contemporary Issues badge. A contingent of local scouts will attend The Main Event biannual 4-day Statewide Girl Scout camp at the Palmer State Fairgrounds near Anchorage. This gathering will include activities such as crafts, theater, dog sledding, singing, and self-defense training. PHDEP funding allows 40 girls and 10 adults to travel to the event.

PHDEP funds enrich the scouting experience for participating boys and girls. For example, PHDEP funding paid camp fees and transportation for 40 Girl and Boy Scouts to attend the Outdoor S'More Summer Camp in August 1996 near Anchorage. The young people attended the Alaska State Fair and participated in activities such as archery, boating, hiking, and campfire cooking. These are first-time experiences for many of these children, since camping and travel are extremely limited on the Aleutian Islands.

The Girl Scouts Susitna Council and the Western Alaska Council of the Boy Scouts of America helped AHA plan and tailor scouting programs to the needs of its scattered communities. In settings as isolated as the small Aleutian villages, materials such as the starter kits from the Girl Scouts Susitna Council and the expertise of visiting scout trainers are invaluable for getting the scouting movement started. Staff from the Girl Scouts Susitna Council came to Sand Point, King Cove, and False Pass in February 1997 to make presentations and identify adult volunteers.

"We looked long and hard at what we could do to make a difference in the lives of our youth," Anderson says about the housing authority's choices in PHDEP activities. With the proven models of DARE and scouting, AHA seems to have found ways that work.

Contact: Jack Smith
Housing Manager
4000 Old Seward Highway, Suite 202
Anchorage, AK 99503
Telephone: (907) 563-2146

Council Gives Voice to Youth in Alaska's Interior

In the vast interior of Alaska, many villages that dot the rough terrain along the Yukon River and its tributaries lack social, recreational, and educational activities that can provide youth with positive alternatives to substance abuse. Youth Sports Program (YSP) grants from HUD's Office of Native American Programs have helped the Interior Regional Housing Authority (IRHA) turn that around through programs such as the regional youth council initiated in 1996.

"The council is important because there has never been a formal process through which youth could express their opinions and be active in Native issues," says Gina Kalloch, the Youth Employment Program coordinator who works with the council. "I've seen that the youth on the council have started to believe that they have a voice and that their ideas can get heard. They are carrying that back to their home villages." The council's name; Saakiakkanaaga, means "the words of the youth" in Koyukon, the dialect of Athabascan common in some interior villages.

According to Saakiakkanaaga's mission statement, the council aims to:

> be a unified voice for the Native youth in interior Alaska; provide cultural alternatives to substance abuse; pass on our culture to the next generation; provide leadership opportunities to prepare tomorrow's Native leaders; and advocate for interior Alaska Native youth.

"There was a big void here before we developed the youth programs," says Alfred "Bear" Ketzler, Jr., director of the Tanana Chiefs Conference (TCC) Business Development Office, the Native corporation covering Alaska's interior and the housing authority's subgrantee for the YSP grant. "The schools have had their budgets cut, and they can't offer many extracurricular opportunities."

The 235,000-square-mile area that TCC serves, 90 percent of the size of Texas, contains 43 rural villages that are among the most isolated communities in the United States. The only urban area is the city of Fairbanks. Approximately 4,000 high school-age youth from Fairbanks and the 22 villages that have IRHA housing are eligible to participate in YSP activities, but participation can be difficult. Only four communities served by TCC can be reached by road; the rest are accessible only by plane, boat, or snowmobile. Unemployment in the villages ranges from 60 to 90 percent, and subsistence activities are a way of life for many. Despite their isolation, these communities have experienced alarming rates of drug and alcohol abuse. In the interior region, drug arrests were up 28 percent between fiscal years 1991 and 1992, according to the Alaska Department of Public Safety. A recent survey of Alaskan youth showed that 45 percent of youth in grades 10, 11, and 12 had tried marijuana and more than 58 percent had tried hard liquor.

"YSP has been a godsend to these villages—they had never had such services before for youth," Ketzler says. YSP grants have funded many activities. Most of the eligible villages have conducted sports and recreation clinics in basketball, swimming, music, and other activities, with instructors and equipment funded by YSP. Twenty older youth earned licenses to operate tour boats in 1996, after taking one of three weeklong Coast Guard water safety classes that prepared them for a licensing exam. YSP paid for instructors, and students covered the exam fee. The 4–H Fisheries Education Program, which encourages youth interest in biology and biotechnology, received fisheries equipment and teacher training from the University of Alaska.

YSP purchased supplies for spirit/cultural camps for youth and elders planned by 12 villages to pass on traditional values and culture to youth. The program also paid transportation costs for six young people to attend the Earth Quest Practicum. This statewide event, run by Federal, State, and local natural resource management agencies, teaches the principles of environmental management. Drug prevention education is an important component of most activities.

In spring 1996 seven youth, one at-large representative and six representatives from TCC sub-regions, began serving 2-year terms in Saakiakkanaaga. When possible, existing village youth councils were asked to nominate individuals to the regional youth council. In villages where no youth councils existed, other local entities offered nominations. The council has met approximately seven times to date. More frequent meetings are prohibited by the students' schedules, the great distances between the villages, and the high cost of air transportation. The October 1996 trip to the Youth Against Tobacco workshop in Anchorage, sponsored by the Alaska Federation of Natives, was a highlight for the group. At this gathering, council members brainstormed with youth from across the State on ways to prevent tobacco use.

In December 1996 Saakiakkanaaga used part of its YSP grant to distribute mini-grants of $500 for youth programming in 10 villages. "The idea for the mini-grants came out of the council's desire for the problems of the youth to be addressed by the youth themselves," says Kalloch. "Offering grants to the villages was a way of encouraging village youth to come together and seek solutions to drug abuse in their communities."

Grantees use their funds for a variety of purposes. The Northway Traditional Council is making a culturally based sobriety banner to hang in its community hall. The grant received by the Tanacross Village Council is funding a guest speaker at its Shiitz Gah ("what we need for life") Youth Conference, an annual substance abuse prevention gathering. Other village groups are purchasing supplies for cultural crafts, camping, or teen centers. The council has instructed each grantee to provide followup information on their projects, such as pictures, receipts, and participation statistics, so that the council can monitor grant usage.

"They are our future leaders," Ketzler says about the youth council members. "In the next few years, the youth council will be setting a lot of direction for TCC in planning youth programs." As funds allow, the council plans to begin sponsoring activities such as sober dances, basketball clinics, and dog races to connect the name of the council to sober activities and publicize it in the villages. Recognizing the need to maintain Saakiakkanaaga beyond the first group of participants, some members plan to start bringing younger youth with them to meetings to give them a taste of what the council is all about. In the future the council wants to serve youth in every TCC village and is searching for additional funding sources to make this possible.

Contact: Alfred "Bear" Ketzler, Jr.
Director, Agriculture Department and Business Development Office
or
Gina Kalloch
Coordinator, Youth Employment Program

Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.
122 First Avenue, Suite 600
Fairbanks, AK 99701
Telephone: (907) 452-8251

Seldovia Tenant Council Takes "TOP Adventure" Statewide

The new Alaskan Resident Organization, spearheaded by the Seldovia Tenant Council (STC) located in Cook Inlet in southeastern Alaska, elected its first board in May 1996. However, board training was deferred until winter to accommodate many Alaskans' seasonal work—commercial or subsistence fishing, construction, hunting, and tourism.

Winter training sessions pose their own hardships in a region where travel is already expensive and problematic. "Just because you want to fly to Seldovia doesn't mean you can," offers Donna Quijance, Seldovia's representative to the statewide board and former president of the tenant council. Seldovia, accessible only by plane or ferry, has no airport radar tower; the pilot's eye gauges visibility. Travel to Anchorage from some of the other board members' communities requires coordinating as many as three airplane connections. To reduce the number of trips necessary, the statewide council coordinates timing of its training sessions with required meetings at the HUD office or various housing authorities in Anchorage.

Because of its nonprofit 501(c)(3) status, Seldovia was eligible in 1994 to apply for and receive the $100,000 in Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP) funds to develop an Alaska-wide resident organization. To carry out its local work, STC had won $40,000 in TOP assistance (at that time known as a Resident Management Technical Assistance Grant) in 1992 and a $60,000 TOP grant in 1994.

"STC administers the State group's funding," Quijance says, "but we want to help the other members of the board gain the confidence to assume increasing responsibility over the organization." To help the board and the represented communities gain leadership experience, the statewide council has regular and alternate board members—an unusual arrangement. "We wanted to be sure no community lost out on the opportunity for training because one person couldn't get away," Quijance explains. "This way there's always someone to take the training back to the residents."

In 1991 when Seldovia's first tenant council was established, board members could never have envisioned that by 1994 Seldovia residents would take on a leading role in forming a statewide council. The first council's original goals were more simple. Seniors living in 18 low-income Lake Side Terrace Manor apartments had received a donated van to transport elderly residents to the 350-person town's only grocery/general store and post office. They needed to organize as a council to qualify for insurance. In 1992 the residents of 16 scattered-site HUD homeownership units, located 3 to 6 miles outside of town on the main road, joined the seniors to establish the Seldovia Tenant Council. More than one-half of the housing authority residents—and one-half of the town—belong to the Seldovia Tribe, tracing their ancestry back to the Aleuts, Eskimos, and Tanaina Indians.

The continued commitment of senior citizens has been vital to helping the novice STC overcome nervousness as it has moved into what Grants Coordinator Barbara Carlough calls "new stages of growth," such as managing the Cook Inlet Housing Authority's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) grant in Seldovia. Quijance recalls Earl Matthewson, STC's long-time vice president, who recently resigned due to ill health. "He worked up until the day he left for the hospital. His life experience, service on school boards, made him invaluable. He knew how to do things." And he passed on that knowledge, commitment, and confidence to other board members.

About 15 housing authority and community residents attended STC-sponsored grant writing and business plan development training sessions. Volunteering on the STC board and attending these sessions have helped four residents locate full-time work in Seldovia. Another resident is poised to open a tour business and was recently elected to the Village Tribal Board. In the homeownership housing units, 8 of 28 adults now have full-time, year-round employment. Three work part-time and 12 seasonally.

The council's 2-year-old thrift store served as "a stepping stone" to employment for two residents—one a former welfare recipient—and brought the town a second retail outlet, Quijance says. Balancing family and other commitments, council members also managed the store and trained employees. "We really wanted to make it work," Quijance says. Recently the store lost its donated space and had to close, but the board is looking for another space. A 1964 earthquake destroyed most of Seldovia's buildings, and the council cannot afford the relatively high rent on buildings constructed after the earthquake.

Since administering PHDEP activities, STC has become interested in managing housing authority residential services such as housing inspections. It has not made much headway, Quijance says. She and Carlough trace some of the difficulty back to the council's early inexperience, not knowing how to approach issues. With perseverance and increasing leadership skills, STC is working to form a stronger relationship with the Cook Inlet Housing Authority.

The board also has a plan to help the housing authority improve repair response time and cost effectiveness in Seldovia. Quijance suggests the housing authority include in its staff training a resident who has drafted a furnace and boiler repair business plan—a cottage industry that would allow him to find work and stay in the community. Currently when pipes break due to wintery conditions, they stay broken until the weather clears enough for the housing authority—250 miles away—to fly someone in to repair them, which also requires overnight lodging.

The approximately 60 housing authority residents represented by STC have directly benefited from their tenant council's increasing know-how. The council has decreased unemployment, provided job training, coordinated drug-free activities for youth, and improved area services. By helping establish a statewide resident organization, Seldovia can help other communities do the same. "Our local council is doing good work here, and we are excited to help other communities duplicate this success," Quijance says. Carlough agrees. "Everyone has the basic skills to begin a TOP adventure."

Contact:

Sharon Burt
President
Seldovia Tenant Council
Box 245
Seldovia, AK 99663
Telephone: (907) 234-7490

Tlingit-Haida Builds Youth Identity, Leadership

Spread along the islands and inlets of Alaska's southeast panhandle, the people of the Tlingit-Haida Regional Housing Authority (T-HRHA) are separated from each other and far from many employment opportunities, but they are not beyond the reach of alcohol or illegal drugs that filter up the 550-mile marine highway. Youth in T-HRHA's housing units are among those vulnerable to substance abuse. Fewer than one-half of high school juniors and seniors in the village of Hoonah, for example, are considered at low risk for substance abuse, while 14 percent have established a pattern of heavy or mixed use. T-HRHA's Public and Indian Housing Drug Elimination Program (PHDEP) response to this threat concentrates on prevention strategies by building youth identity through increasing awareness of traditional culture and fostering leadership skills.

"[O]ur concern is not only in providing housing but becoming involved in the building of a thriving, productive community," says Jacqueline Johnson, executive director of T-HRHA. One way of building strong communities is to substitute cultural pride for the despair that leads to substance abuse.

"Alaska's Natives suffer the effects of alcohol and other drugs disproportionally. Virtually every available measure confirms this," reports the State of Alaska's *Strategic Plan for the Division of Alcoholism and Drug Abuse*. On any given day, 5 percent of the native population in the southeast region is in treatment for substance abuse. The Native Alaskan suicide rate is 6 times the national average but 12 times the national rate for males ages 20 to 24—and most suicides are alcohol related.

T-HRHA manages 594 housing units and has another 150 under development in southeast Alaska, mostly in remote and isolated villages such as Klukwan, Kake, Hydaburg, and Saxman. Hoonah is typical: Two-thirds of the 785 people who live there are Native, and about one-third live in 84 HUD housing units. Commercial fishing and logging support the population, with most residents maintaining a subsistence lifestyle.

T-HRHA's drug elimination program supports three programs that use cultural awareness as a bridge to strengthening youth identity: Chilkoot Culture Camp, Youth Leadership, and the Saxman Youth Sports and Activities Program. Funded by HUD's Youth Sports Program before receiving funding through PHDEP, the programs are strongly endorsed by resident organizations. The president of the Kake Resident Organization has called them "important for the future of our youth and us." Currently $63,000 in local funds supplement the $250,000 PHDEP grant.

Chilkoot Culture Camp is located on the banks of the Chilkoot River in Haines, Alaska, at the site of a traditional village. This camp was developed from the vision of Tlingit leader Austin Hammond, Sr., who was guided by his grandfather's admonition to carry on traditional ways. Participants perform traditional songs and dances; gather and prepare native foods; learn Tlingit language, stories, and history; study traditional medicines; and practice native crafts and regalia making. They also hear substance abuse prevention messages. In the mornings campers take part in directed activities, always including some community project, such as restoring traditional grave sites nearby or clearing the overgrowth from the Peace Rock. This rock was the place where leaders came to pray and seek solutions in times of conflict. Campers work at a craft of their choice during the afternoons. Talking circles help campers reinforce what they learned and how they will use it.

"I have gone to camp for 6 years, and it has changed how I live and who I am," explains youth leader Jeremy Timothy. "I go to the camp every year because I am trying to keep the culture and my people alive."

T-HRHA provides scholarships so that young residents can attend Chilkoot Culture Camp, which conducts two sessions for 44 campers each in 2 age groups: 10 to 13 and 14 and older. To apply, youth submit a report explaining why they should be chosen to attend and how substance abuse affects their lives. Most campers gain a much greater appreciation of traditional culture and how they can continue to make it part of their lives, reports community liaison Lala Vigil. Upon returning home, campers submit followup reports on what they learned and how they will use it, which T-HRHA combines in a newsletter to its residents and others.

Through another initiative T-HRHA gathered 27 youth in grades 10 to 12 for a 5-day Youth Leadership Institute in 1996. The youth left their isolated villages—perhaps for the first time in their lives—to learn about State and tribal government, Tlingit culture, traditional values, and substance abuse issues. The intensive program, housed in a retreat center near Juneau, focused on learning leadership skills, making healthy choices, and serving their communities. It emphasized using teamwork, building a positive self-image, training for peer mediation, and developing a network of contacts to rely upon for support. The Institute closed with a traditional potlatch honoring elders with special gifts.

These programs make a difference, Vigil says. When young people come back from Chilkoot Culture Camp or the Leadership Institute, they become leaders in their communities. They become role models, especially for younger members of the Alaska Native Sisterhood and Alaska Native Brotherhood youth clubs.

Providing ongoing, year-round support for youth in one community, the Saxman Youth Sports and Activities Program is a partnership between the city of Saxman and the local resident organization. Activities range from tutoring to sports tournaments. The 1996 basketball tournament attracted teams from 6 communities, involving more than 200 people. A planned Southeast Native Youth Olympics was changed to a cultural exchange when research discovered that traditional gatherings featured not games but activities such as bead working, basket making, leather working, jewelry making, carving, and food gathering and preparation.

Community leaders report that these programs are working changes: The secretary of the Saxman Home Owners Association noted that "since the start of the program last year, we have had a significant decline in juvenile problems in Saxman." The regional community adviser of the Healthy Nations Program—a collaboration of organizations that fosters a traditional Native attitude and approach toward harmful substances—notes that "[this grant] opens the lines of communication between the communities, providing opportunities that are not available in their remote areas."

Contact: Lala Vigil
Community Liaison
P.O. Box 32237
Juneau, AK 99803–2237
Telephone: (907) 780–6868

☆ U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE 1997 425-568/70238

April 1997

42

BEST COPY